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Extension Service - United States Department of Agriculture



W A R T I M E E X T E N S I O N

SUMMARY OF EXTENSION WORK, TECHNIQUES, AND RESULTS
BASED ON STATE REPORTS

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Reports on farm labor, food production and preservation, and sewing-machine clinics are among the high spots of this week's summary.

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MISSOURI

November 1, 1943

Emergency farm labor.-Cotton picking has reached and passed peak. Releases were given 264 pickers in late October to go to Arizona to aid in harvesting crop there. Second picking and cleaning up of Missouri crop probably will keep much of labor in State busy during most of November.

Intensive campaign to obtain corn shuckers for northwest Missouri resulted in 250 men being sent there, where excellent crop of corn was ready for harvest. Counties in north Missouri completed survey of needs and indicated they could use more than 600 shuckers from outside.

Requests for year-round married workers continue to come into State office. One county, Atchison, sent in 6 requests in 1 day to fill jobs offering 9 cents a bushel plus room and board during corn-shucking season and \$65 a month after that.

To aid local officials in interpreting and carrying out Selective Service regulations in regard to men between 18 and 38 who work on farms, series of 22 district meetings was held. Members of county Selective Service boards, county agents, and War Board chairmen were invited to meetings. Representatives of State Selective Service board and Extension Service spoke at each meeting. Half of time was devoted to questions and answers.

Home food preservation.-Agents in 87 counties, at request of State extension office, checked up year's work in home food preservation. Through local leaders, canning centers, and cooperating agencies they found that 63,635,693 quarts of fruits and vegetables had been canned, not including work done in larger urban areas. In addition, year's record of food preservation in these counties included 4,482,661 containers of fruit butter, jams, jellies, and marmalades. Foods conserved by methods other than canning included 6,665,639 pounds of frozen food in home and community freezers, 567,327 pounds of dehydrated fruits and vegetables, about 47 million bushels of root crops in common storage, and more than 3 million

gallons of vegetables preserved by brining or salting. Dehydrators purchased during year numbered 755 and those made at home, 2,104. Number of pressure cookers used was 29,495.

4-H Club activities.--Several high records of food production by individual 4-H Club members were reported. Herman Clizer, 13 years old, in Andrew County, raised litter of 13 pigs which won top place at district show and were marketed at 210 days of age weighing 3,350 pounds. Herman White, of Platte County, harvested 43,300 pounds of potatoes from $3\frac{1}{2}$ -acre project. Average yield was slightly above 206 bushels an acre, and three-fourths of crop graded U.S. No. 1. Robert and Sue Mary James of Clinton County marketed 27 lambs from their 4-H flock of 24 ewes. When sold, lambs averaged 92 pounds each, and all but 6 graded choice.

Two adjoining counties, St. Francois and Perry, piled up combined 4-H Club enrollment of 1,588 boys and girls. Together they made notable record in food production, with 211 members producing pork, 833 growing vegetables, 22 raising chickens, 12 producing baby beeves, 14 operating dairy projects, and 9 raising sheep. In addition, 254 members made their own clothes, and all helped with farm labor and community activities.

Virginia Tweedie, Carroll County 4-H Club member, did her part toward winning war by canning, assisting in canning demonstrations, helping in community tasks of rationing, and collecting critically needed materials. She canned more than 600 quarts of fruits and vegetables, helped fill two large barns with hay and oats, and collected 6,000 pounds of scrap iron and 65 pounds of old rubber.

Soybean yields.--More than 30 percent increase in soybean yield was obtained by J. L. King in Carroll County by inoculating seed. When seed was planted he placed inoculated seed in one box and uninoculated in other box of planter. When field was harvested recently a careful check was made of two adjacent rows. Inoculated row yielded at rate of 24.6 bushels an acre, and uninoculated row yielded at rate of 18.6 bushels. There was almost 2 pounds difference in weight of beans per bushel.

Soil conservation.--Temporary county committee was named in Jefferson County to explore possibilities of flood control under Missouri's new soil conservation districts law. It reported that no member of committee could think of better plan for flood control than county-wide organization to promote general use of terracing, contour farming, crop rotation, use of lime and fertilizer, and control of forest fires.

Home sewing.--Family clothing problems have been simplified for 253 Oregon County homemakers since they learned to clean, repair, and adjust their own sewing machines in extension clinics. So great have been benefits that still other groups are requesting clinics. "As long as there are requests there will be clinics," says Florence Shull, home demonstration agent. Only one machine has been found that was beyond repair, even though some women brought machines that had long been stored in attics or basements.

War bond sales.--Crawford County Victory Organization demonstrated powerful influence of well-organized and well-trained local leaders. With 150 school-district leaders working on third war loan drive, organization was responsible for sale of \$200,000 worth of bonds. County's quota was exceeded by 20 percent.

TEXAS

November 1, 1943

Farm labor.-Critical labor area has shifted from rice fields of Gulf Coastal region to cottonfields of west Texas plains, which could use additional 40,000 cotton pickers. Movement of migratory workers in that direction is slow and uncertain. Perhaps tightest spots are in Pecos and Rio Grande Valleys where long-staple cotton is major seasonal crop. El Paso County obtained 900 Italian war prisoners. Among counties having acute shortage are Wilbarger, Briscoe, Jones, Haskell, Lubbock, and Lamb. Currently no relief is in sight for these counties except local recruiting. Few prison camps are near these counties, and besides, war prisoners are not adept at cotton picking and pulling. About 2,000 war prisoners were moved to rice fields in recent weeks. Camps were set up in Wharton, Alvin, Rosenberg, Liberty, and Bay City. Possibly prisoners will be moved from a Louisiana camp to aid in Jefferson County. Good weather has helped, as have 200 farm workers recruited in counties where labor needs were not pressing.

Vegetable production.-Major vegetable truck crop plantings are increasing in lower Rio Grande Valley and Winter Garden areas. Drought retarded early growth, but with irrigation available in about 60 percent of area, and fairly good stands of vegetables on dry land, production of winter vegetables probably will show definite increase over 1943. Cabbage and onions are outstanding, and spinach, carrots, and beets also show increase.

Fall and winter gardens throughout State are exceptionally good. September rains helped vegetables, and many of quick growth, such as mustard greens and early lettuce, have reached edible stage. Townspeople are more interested in back-yard gardens than ever before. County extension agents are promoting gardening through local garden and service clubs and other agencies. Seedsmen, through their associations, are cooperating.

County agents and extension horticulturists are giving assistance in vegetable planting programs at detention camps for enemy prisoners of war. Commanding officers are using labor to produce enough vegetables for camps.

Poultry.-Extension poultrymen are giving full time to cooperating with turkey producers, especially in advising on selection of breeding stock and tube-testing flocks. Seven producers in State are trap-nesting and progeny-testing their turkeys under supervision of extension poultrymen, who are also responsible for testing of approximately 2,500 breeder turkeys for Brady and Santa Anna Turkey Egg Association. All these birds will be tube-tested.

Cattle grub control.-Extension entomologists, in preparing 1943-44 cattle grub and lice control program, obtained from county agents estimate of number of animals likely to be treated in their counties, and quantity of material needed. This information was sent to Washington as basis for allocation of rotenone. About 500,000 animals were reported treated for grubs last year, and number is expected to be doubled this year. During past 6 weeks entomologists and livestock specialists covered much of State and discussed grub and lice control with county agents. Entomologists sent text matter and illustration mats to agents for use in local newspapers to stimulate interest in program. Agents were also furnished list of dealers in rotenone and wettable sulphur and their prices, to enable local dealers to obtain supply of necessary materials for farmers and ranchmen. Circulars on grub control were prepared for distribution by county agents to give cattle producers advance information on scope of program.

Agricultural engineering.-Literature is in preparation on three ideas for home-made labor-saving equipment -- bulldozer, scratcher, and calf table-squeeze. Number of farmers and ranchmen are using novel water-pumping arrangement suggested by agricultural engineer to meet shortage of available small engines for pumping water during extended lulls in wind. Power for pumper is furnished by tractor, truck, pick-up, or automobile.

Farmer cooperative buying.-Shortage of native fruits brought about cooperative buying of 3,693 dozen pineapples by 6,324 farm families in 47 counties. Total of 125,724 pints of fruit and 28,493 pints of juice were canned. Products represented value of about \$30,000 at retail and 3½ million ration points. Volume of cooperative buying of apples is expected to equal that of pineapples.

Salvaging sewing machines.-In preparation for increase in home sewing, extension clothing specialist has held clinics throughout State to teach housewives how to clean and maintain sewing machines. As result, 200 machines in Jones County were cleaned, 63 in Jefferson County, more than 100 in Hood County, and several hundred in Tarrant County. A 26-year-old machine in Crosby was cleaned for first time and then used by its owner in making eight garments. In Upton County, a sewing machine stored for 17 years and too rusty to operate was salvaged and restored to satisfactory service.

Farm landscaping and home sanitation.-In seven counties, specialist worked with farm families and extension agents on simplifying landscape for satisfactory appearance with less upkeep. Native buffalo grass in lawns requires less work than bermuda. Native and hardy shrubs are used to replace annuals and ill-adapted shrubs for same reason. Use of fruit and nut trees is advocated. Morale-building value of beauty in landscape was impressed upon a Calhoun County demonstrator whose homesick soldier son wrote and asked that every nook and corner of home landscape be photographed and sent to him. He helped to level lawn and plant shrubs when his family undertook demonstration about 6 years ago.

Demands for help in improving farm home sanitation are increasing. Requests for expert assistance in sewage disposal were referred to State health department. Assistance of 36 local health units was pledged by director of Texas State Health Department and by State sanitary engineer.

Negro activities.-State leader of negro extension work estimates that about 10 per cent more urban people are helping in picking this year, and 10 percent more old people are working with assistance of crew leaders. Farm families are more liberal than in previous years in helping one another in harvesting. McLennan County furnished 1,040 cotton pickers for Rio Grande Valley, 340 for similar work in Falls County, 230 for Hill County, 320 for Limestone, 110 for Navarro, and 184 for others. Tractor drivers, dairy hands, tenants, sharecroppers, and other workers are being solicited to aid labor shortage. Reports from 22 county agricultural agents show that 216 negro county Victory leaders assisted in making and carrying out plans for third war loan drive. Negro families in 12 counties bought \$98,107 worth of bonds and stamps. Three district meetings were held to train county negro extension agents in food preparation and conservation, home improvement, family relationship, poultry management, and agricultural engineering. Among demonstrations was series on selection and preparation of foods in wartime diet.